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FEMA Approved \$83.1 Million for 48 Projects in the USVI in September

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The Federal Emergency Management Agency announced Tuesday that through its Public Assistance program, it approved 48 obligations for \$83.1 million. FEMA said these obligations will help strengthen community lifelines, such as health and medical, energy, and safety and security as the territory recovers from hurricanes Irma and Maria.

The health and medical lifeline was obligated \$25 million for projects to include the completion for the Governor Juan F. Luis Hospital temporary facility in Christiansted, FEMA made known.

At least \$15.5 million was awarded to fortify the energy lifeline for the territory's electrical grid. Projects include reimbursement for emergency electrical distribution repairs on St. Thomas and St. Croix and repairs to the Donald C. Francois and Tutu power substations on St. Thomas and St.

John Substation.

“The recovery is moving. Having access to these funds is necessary for the territory to begin work on many of these facilities that are lying in disrepair,” said Adrienne L. Williams-Octalien, director of the Office of Disaster Recovery. “Our office works closely with FEMA and local recipients to move critical projects like these forward and ultimately ensure that federal dollars are spent correctly.”

Over \$10 million was obligated to reimburse the V.I. Police Department for emergency protective measures for costs such as crowd control and search and rescue after the 2017 hurricanes, according to the federal agency.

“September’s accomplishments by our Public Assistance team represents substantial progress in supporting the Territory’s plans to strengthen its community lifelines. We will continue to work tirelessly to achieve the reconstruction of a stronger Virgin Islands,” said Federal Coordinating Officer Bill Vogel.

More than \$18 million was obligated for repairs to public buildings. Projects include replacement of the Alva A. Swan Correctional Annex Building on St. Thomas and repairs to the Governor’s Office in Christiansted and Arthur Abel Complex in Frederiksted.

V.I. Department of Sports, Parks and Recreation was obligated \$11.8 million for projects including repairs to Randal Doc James Racetrack and Vincent Mason Coral Resort Park & Pool on St. Croix, and repairs to the Pavilion/Town Center facility on Water Island.

More than \$947,000 was obligated for housing, which includes permanent repairs to the George Simmons Terrace Community Center on St. John.

FEMA’s said its Public Assistance team will continue to formulate recovery projects in collaboration with the territory to better withstand disasters and operate continuously.